

Message Text

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SUBJ: GREEK EMPLOYEES AT U.S. FACILITIES TO STRIKE

1. SUMMARY. THE LOCAL UNION OF GREEK EMPLOYEES OF U.S. FORCES IN GREECE ANNOUNCED MAY 19 THAT A TWENTY-FOUR STRIKE WILL BE HELD AT ALL U.S. FACILITIES IN GREECE FROM 7 A.M. MAY 23 TO 7 A.M. MAY 24. STRIKE WILL INCONVENIENCE BUT WILL NOT AFFECT ESSENTIAL OPERATIONS AT U.S. INSTALLATIONS. OTHER UNIONS, IN SYMPATHY MOVE, HAVE CALLED FOR A BOYCOTT OF U.S. PRODUCTS AND OTHER ACTIONS TO SHOW THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH U.S. FORCES EMPLOYEES UNION. END SUMMARY.

2. THE STRIKE IS BEING HELD TO PROTEST AGAINST FORTHCOMING SEPARATIONS OF A NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES OF U.S. FORCES IN GREECE. BOTH BECAUSE OF PENDING PHASE-DOWN OF CLUB ACTIVITIES, TERMINATION OF SOME ACTIVITIES AT ATHENAI AIRBASE, AND BECAUSE OF TOTALLY UNRELATED MANAGEMENT SHIFTS -- SUCH AS MOVE OF USDESEA OFFICE TO SPAIN, AND STARS AND STRIPES TO GERMANY -- THE USAF PERSONNEL OFFICE HAS BEEN PREPARING RIF NOTICES FOR 64 GREEK AND 21 AMERICAN EMPLOYEES. MOST OF THE

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GREEK EMPLOYEES AFFECTED ARE EMPLOYED AT ATHENAI AIRBASE

THROUGH THE HELLENIC AIR FORCE WHICH SERVES AS LEGAL EMPLOYER.

3. IN REACTION TO THIS PENDING ACTION, AND IN ANTICIPATION OF FURTHER REDUCTIONS, THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE UNION VOTED IN FAVOR OF A PROTEST STRIKE AT A GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON MAY 16 WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT. THE UNION'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECIDED ON MAY 19 TO STAGE A TWENTY-FOUR HOUR PROTEST STRIKE FROM 7 A.M. MAY 23 TO 7 A.M. MAY 24. THE STRIKE WILL INVOLVE ABOUT 1200 GREEK EMPLOYEES AT ALL U.S. MILITARY FACILITIES IN GREECE AND IN RELATED NON-APPROPRIATED FUNDS ACTIVITIES SUCH AS EXCHANGES (PX) AND CLUBS. IT WILL APPARENTLY NOT INVOLVE ABOUT 300 GREEK EMPLOYEES OF THE ATHENAI BASE MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR, PACIFIC ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS. SOME VITAL SERVICES, SUCH AS ATHENAI AIRBASE FIRE DEPARTMENT, WILL BE AFFECTED BY THIS STRIKE, BUT USAF PERSONNEL OFFICE BELIEVES AD HOC ARRANGEMENTS CAN HANDLE ANY EMERGENCIES THAT MAY ARISE DURING THE BRIEF STRIKE.

4. THE LOCAL UNION SECURED SOME DEGREE OF SUPPORT FROM THE OTHER GREEK TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS FOR ITS STRIKE, INCLUDING A CALL FOR WORKERS TO BOYCOTT U.S. PRODUCTS FOR 64 DAYS. ACCORDING TO PRESS COMMENTS, THE GARBAGEMEN OF ATHENS HAVE ALSO DECIDED AS AN EXPRESSION OF SOLIDARITY TO REFRAIN FOR 64 DAYS FROM COLLECTING GARBAGE FROM THE AREAS AROUND AMERICAN BASES, FROM THE EMBASSY AND AMERICAN CONSULATES (SIC), AND ALSO FROM THE HOMES OF AMERICANS.

5. REGARDING THE REDUCTION IN PERSONNEL PROBLEM, THE USAF PERSONNEL OFFICE COMMENTS THAT ANY APPRECIABLE PHASE-DOWN OF U.S. ACTIVITIES WILL REQUIRE A PROPORTIONAL REDUCTION OF THE WORK FORCE, BOTH AMERICAN AND GREEK. ITS SPOKESMAN SAYS NOT ALL WORKERS IN THE PENDING FIRST ROUND OF REDUCTIONS WILL BE DISCHARGED SINCE EVERY EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO PLACE THOSE AFFECTED IN OTHER POSITIONS OR IN OTHER AREAS. HOWEVER THE UNION APPEARS TO FEAR EVENTUAL MASS REDUCTIONS AS A RESULT OF THE CLOSING OF U.S. FACILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH U.S.-GREEK BASE NEGOTIATIONS. THROUGH STRIKE ACTION IT HOPES TO INFLUENCE BOTH U.S. AUTHORITIES AND THE GOG TO TAKE WORKER CLAIMS FOR ECONOMIC SECURITY AND COMPASSIONATE HANDLING OF FORCE REDUCTIONS INTO ACCOUNT. THE UNION'S PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN IS STRESSING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT "ILLEGALLY HIRED AMERICAN EMPLOYEES" SHOULD BE DISMISSED BEFORE ANY GREEKS ARE AND THAT U.S. AUTHORITIES MUST SHOW RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS OF GREEK WORKERS.
KUBISCH

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